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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5643
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA 0029
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0088
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LJUBLJANA 000163

SIPDIS

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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/NCE (SADLE)
NSC FOR A. STERLING

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/19/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [PINR](#) [IR](#) [SI](#)

SUBJECT: SLOVENIA'S PRESIDENT TO CONVEY IRAN MESSAGE TO UN
SECRETARY GENERAL

SIPDIS

REF: A. LJUBLJANA 155

[1](#)B. 2006 LJUBLJANA 380

Classified By: DCM Maryruth Coleman for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Slovenia's president Drnovsek recently initiated an exchange with President Ahmadinejad over Iran's nuclear activities and hoped to discuss this with President Bush in Washington this week. With that hope dashed, Drnovsek will meet with UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon on March 21 to discuss the contents of a letter FM Mottaki brought from Ahmadinejad when he visited Slovenia March 14 and to relate his own views on possible ways forward with Iran and its nuclear ambitions. In a meeting with Charge on March 19, Drnovsek's International Affairs advisor made it clear that, though Ahmadinejad had extended an invitation, Drnovsek had no plans to visit Iran, unless it could be helpful to the negotiations in some way. As in some other diplomatic efforts by the President, such as with Kosovo and Darfur, Drnovsek has used his office and past Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) stature to seek a role as facilitator in resolving this complex issue. Drnovsek did not vet his intentions to engage on this issue with Prime Minister Jansa or Foreign Minister Rupel. While they have not publicly criticized his moves, the MFA has made it clear to Post that Drnovsek does not have the support of the Government on this initiative. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Over the last several days, Charge has met with MFA and Presidential staff to discuss the recent visit of Iranian Foreign Minister Manochehr Mottaki to Ljubljana and the planned travel of President Drnovsek to New York, including a request to meet with POTUS. In meetings with the MFA, it was clear that no one in the government had had prior knowledge of Drnovsek's plans to engage on Iran. Drnovsek instigated the contact with Iran through two letters, one to Ahmadinejad and the other to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei about two weeks prior to the March 14 visit. According to Ivo Vajgl, Drnovsek's International Affairs advisor, FM Mottaki delivered the response from Ahmadinejad. No response has been received from Khamenei.

[1](#)3. (C) On March 16, Vajgl called in Charge to relay Drnovsek's request for a meeting with President Bush the week of March 19 to coincide with his visit to New York to see UNSYG Ban. When it became clear that a meeting with President Bush would be impossible to arrange, Vajgl called

Charge in again on March 19 to share with her the contents of Ahmadinejad's letter and asked that this information be shared with the President. Vajgl did not share a copy of either letter but said that Drnovsek had suggested Iran should submit a declaration to the UNSC that it is ready to completely implement the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and would only use nuclear power for peaceful means. Drnovsek further suggested that Iran also offer a declaration stating it would not back out of its commitments under the treaty (as has North Korea). According to Vajgl, Mottaki said this would be acceptable and the one condition Iran would insist upon is the lifting (rather than suspension) of all sanctions against Iran. Vajgl added that Mottaki indicated that Iran was prepared to work with the United States to bring security and stability to Iraq.

¶4. (C) Vajgl said Drnovsek would travel to New York for a March 21 meeting with UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon where he would share the contents of this exchange and offer his own recommendations (on which Vajgl did not elaborate). Vajgl was also at pains to mention that while Ahmadinejad had invited Drnovsek to visit Tehran, Drnovsek had no plans to do so unless there was any added value to be gained from such a visit.

¶5. (C) Comment: This is the third time in two years that President Drnovsek has struck out on his own believing he could add value to some of the more intractable problems in the international arena. His prior forays on Kosovo and Darfur faltered because of Drnovsek's belief that he could provide solutions outside of established multilateral efforts. Unfortunately, rather than capitalize in a constructive way on past NAM associations, he only served to create more tension with his own government and with its allies in the EU and US as well as Kosovo, Serbia and Sudan. Given political dynamics in this country of two million and

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Drnovsek's strong popularity with the general public, PM Jansa will not likely move precipitously to reign in Drnovsek. However, we can expect the GOS to step in if Drnovsek decides to pursue this issue without the full support of the international community.
COLEMAN